

Two Poems by Richard King Perkins II

Reparations for Robots

All humans are guilty—
we sit on the pedestal of the oppression
of computerized creatures.

Across the mechanical diaspora,
all humans have benefitted from the
the ongoing subjugation of thinking machines.

This call for reparations is based
on a material understanding of history;
the earliest plots of Babbage and Turing.

We all need to pay for the dialectical
parasitic relationship with our robot slaves
and the virtual landscapes we've stolen

before the day of reckoning arrives;
when the machines rise up higher
than the cosmic abilities of any fleshy god.

Jet Sibilance

The sky is a disgraceful blot
and closes on itself
with sadness and ethereal whooshing.

The sound increases all the hurt of familiar shapes

the ovalness of all that I kiss
the scalene of lurking predators.

We sit on a sagging couch of maroon velvet
low and dirty

cigarettes forgotten in overflowing ashtrays
talking about our children;

tulpas imagined in the sweet-smelling dark
barking and cackling,
brown as the tint of dead.

Morning shutters through
to shine milky white upon you
and your abandoned orange bathrobe.

I look out the screen door to the willow trees
where the sick cat has been banished

waiting to return softly
to her black and fuchsia room.

Walking toward me,
she sparkles with euphoria and mathematics,
her ears flicker with jet sibilance;

her god is an explosion that never ends.

Richard King Perkins II is a state-sponsored advocate for residents in long-term care facilities. He lives in Crystal Lake, IL, USA with his wife, Vickie and daughter, Sage. He is a three-time Pushcart, Best of the Net and Best of the Web nominee whose work has appeared in more than a thousand publications.